

About This Report

The Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program was established under the authority of Section 408 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) as reauthorized in 2006. This MSA-required biennial report to Congress and the public summarizes the steps taken by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in fiscal years (FY) 2010 and 2011 to identify, monitor, and protect deep-sea coral areas, including the program's research activities and results. This report was developed in consultation with the Regional Fishery Management Councils. This report is supplemented by further descriptions of program-funded activities available at www.habitat.noaa.gov/deepseacorals.

The Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program ("program") collaborates with other NOAA programs and offices, such as National Marine Sanctuaries, Ocean Exploration and Research, Fisheries Science Centers, Fisheries Regional Offices, and the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science. These programs and offices support exploration, research and management activities critical to understanding and managing deep-sea corals and other trust resources. Additionally, the program's work is enhanced by the research and ongoing collaborations with the Regional Fishery Management Councils, other federal agencies, international partners, and non-governmental and academic scientists. Accomplishments of these partner programs and agencies, while important to the program, will not be specifically discussed as they are outside the scope of this report.



MSA Section 408. Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program



(a) IN GENERAL - The Secretary, in consultation with appropriate regional fishery management Councils and in coordination with other Federal agencies and educational institutions, shall, subject to the availability of appropriations, establish a program--

- (1) to identify existing research on, and known locations of, deep-sea corals and submit such information to the appropriate Councils;
- (2) to locate and map locations of deep-sea corals and submit such information to the Councils;
- (3) to monitor activity in locations where deep-sea corals are known or likely to occur, based on best scientific information available, including through underwater or remote sensing technologies and submit such information to the appropriate Councils;
- (4) to conduct research, including cooperative research with fishing industry participants, on deep-sea corals and related species, and on survey methods;
- (5) to develop technologies or methods designed to assist fishing industry participants in reducing interactions between fishing gear and deep-sea corals; and
- (6) to prioritize program activities in areas where deep-sea corals are known to occur, and in areas where scientific modeling or other methods predict deep-sea corals are likely to be present.

(b) REPORTING - Beginning 1 year after the date of enactment of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006, the Secretary, in consultation with the Councils, shall submit biennial reports to Congress and the public on steps taken by the Secretary to identify, monitor, and protect deep-sea coral areas, including summaries of the results of mapping, research, and data collection performed under the program.